

MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDED CLAIMSClaim 1. (Twice Amended):

A method for increasing the feed efficiency of animals comprising administering to the animals an ~~essentially dry~~ solid feed comprising a feedstuff and an amount of an organism that increases the feed efficiency of said animals, wherein said organism is selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacillus buchneri*, *Lactobacillus kefir*, *Lactobacillus parakefir* and *Lactobacillus parabuchneri*.

Claim 14. (Amended):

An ~~essentially dry~~ solid feed comprising a solid feedstuff and an amount of an organism selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacillus buchneri*, *Lactobacillus kefir*, *Lactobacillus parakefir* and *Lactobacillus parabuchneri*, wherein said amount of organism increases animal feed efficiency.

Claim 15. (Amended):

The ~~dry~~ solid feed according to claim 14, wherein said organism is *Lactobacillus buchneri*.

Claim 16. (Amended):

The ~~dry~~ solid feed according to claim 14, wherein said amount of organism is administered in an amount of between 10^5 and 10^{14} colony forming units (CFU) per head per day.

Claim 17. (Amended):

The ~~dry~~ solid feed according to claim 14, wherein said amount of organism is between 10^9 and 10^{10} colony forming units (CFU) per head per day.

Claim 18. (Amended):

The dry solid feed according to claim 14, wherein said solid feedstuff comprises forage, cereal grain, grasses, legumes, crop residues, corn, sorghum, wheat, rye, barley, oats, rice, cottonseed, gin trash, cotton processing byproducts, potato waste, citrus pulp, almond hulls, peanut hulls, bakery waste, wheat midds, or mixtures thereof.